



planning & building *news*

New Year, New Vision

Concluding almost four years of collaborative work between the city and the community of Chula Vista, the Chula Vista City Council adopted an updated General Plan in December. Now, the City begins its New Year looking ahead through the lens of this new plan, which will

guide the City's growth over the next 25 years. The General Plan update took into consideration the effects of future growth and development

on the City and ways to maintain and enhance our quality of life. It identifies how land will be used, how needs for roads, parks and other public facilities will be met, and how natural resources will be protected.

Some highlights of the new plan include:

- Maintaining and building upon what is good in Chula Vista;
- Renewing western Chula Vista;
- Promoting economic development and the creation of high quality jobs;

- Expanding entertainment, recreational and cultural opportunities;
- Creating a future university in Chula Vista;
- Strengthening the connection between east and west Chula Vista and the Bayfront;
- Promoting more compact building design and a mix of uses in select areas, and encouraging walking and transit;
- Preserving an extensive open space system with major parks, greenbelts and preserves.

A program detailing how the updated General Plan will be carried out is to be completed within the first quarter of 2006. The City has already begun a process for addressing questions likely to arise from the changes. Expect to see detailed plans for particular areas; such as the ongoing Urban Core Specific Plan, and an update of the Zoning Ordinance, to reflect the new General Plan and the latest thinking on how to best manage future growth and development.

Final versions of the documents and maps will soon be available. Check our website at www.chulavistaca.gov/sc/pb or call 619-409-5486. ■

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OUR MISSION *is to guide the physical development of the City through the implementation of the General Plan and Building Codes. We are committed to enhancing the quality of life in our community by planning for sound infrastructure and public services, protection of the environment, and promotion of high quality social and economic growth.*



Building Industry Boards Seeking Members

Disabled Access Board to Become Active

The City's Board of Access Appeals is beginning the process of recruiting members and establishing procedures to become an active board. The five-member board will hear appeals of taken by the Building Official related to disabled access issues. California state law requires that two voting members be physically disabled persons, two members be experienced in construction, and one member be a public member. See below to "Be a Board Member."

Board of Appeals and Advisors

There are two vacancies to be filled on this seven-member board. This board is an advisory body that serves as a resource to advise and make recommendations to the City Council and City Manager, the Building Official, and the Fire Chief on matters

relating to building construction. Some functions of this board include:

- Serve as a forum for discussions, research, and analysis of critical building construction issues;
- Investigate and advise Council regarding alternate materials, types of construction, and interpretation of City Building Codes
- Conduct public hearings and recommend to the Council new legislation pertaining to the design and construction of buildings
- Hear appeals relating to determinations by the City regarding public nuisances and abatement.

See below to "Be a Board Member."

Be a Board Member

To learn more about these boards or to apply, visit or call the City Clerks Office, 276 Fourth Avenue, tel: 619-691-5041 or online at www.chulavistaca.gov/City_Services/Administrative_Services/City_Clerk. ■

Rental Housing Safety

To ensure that all rentals in the City are maintained in a safe and sanitary manner, Code Enforcement staff inspects every apartment complex and mobile home park in Chula Vista. Inspections are generally scheduled once each five to seven years. The inspectors check for a long list of items, including sufficient heating, ventilation, electrical systems and trash storage and removal. Fire alarms and sprinkler systems are also tested and building construction is inspected for safety.

In 2005, approximately 1300 units were inspected. Following an inspection, property owners are given a list of items that need to be fixed and given a time frame for repairs or penalties for failure to comply. In addition to regularly scheduled inspections, staff also responds to tenant complaints. For more information on the Housing Inspection program, call 619-691-5272. ■

January 31 Deadline

Have you renewed your business license for 2006? All business licenses in Chula Vista expire December 31 each year and owners are sent a renewal notice in December. Be sure to return your renewal notice with fees due by January 31. Failure to renew before the deadline will result in penalties, beginning at 10% of the license fee, that increase each month after January up to 60%. If you haven't received your renewal notice or have any questions about how to renew, call 619-409-5436 (Tip: Press #2 to bypass introduction). ■

Planning & Building Closed for Move Feb. 15-20

Planning, Building and Engineering will be closed February 15-20 to relocate staff for a remodel of the Public Services Building (Bldg 200). Every effort will be made to re-open the public counters on Feb. 21 in the former Police Department Building (Bldg. 300) on the corner of Fourth Ave. and Davidson St. However, please call in advance if you plan to visit these departments during the week of Feb. 20 to ensure there was no delay in schedule. Building: 691-5272; Engineering: 691-5024; Planning: 691-5101. ■

We are CERT-ified

No amount of training can fully prepare you for the personal experience of an emergency. The emotional and physical impact of a natural disaster, such as Hurricane Katrina can be unfathomable. Four remarkable Chula Vista Planning and Building employees learned this first-hand when they volunteered last October in the Gulf Coast. Mike Hays (Inspector), Sam Hall (Inspector), Scott Harris (Plans Examiner), and Martin Miller (Planner) all felt compelled to lend a hand when they saw the devastation caused by the storm. Hays, Hall and Harris traveled to Mississippi where they helped local jurisdictions inspect and assess buildings that were damaged by the storm. Miller

volunteered at a Red Cross shelter in Louisiana that was set up to house 2,000 people left homeless by the hurricane. "We are proud to work with such committed and caring individuals," said Jim Sandoval, Director of Planning and Building. "Chula Vista residents are fortunate to have such committed and well-trained people to assist in case of an emergency here at home."

Sandoval refers to the training these volunteers received as part of the City's involvement in the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program. CERT is a national effort that



educates people about disaster preparedness and trains them to assist emergency personnel. In the event of an emergency, look for Chula Vista's

Planning and Building Department to play a key role in emergency response. To date, the department has 27 staff trained in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.

Training of the general public in CERT is available. For more information please contact the City's Emergency Services Manager at (619) 476-2303. ■

New Energy Standards

Though home and business owners know that saving energy translates into lower utility bills, the State of California sets energy standards with the added goal of increasing the stability of the state's electrical system and improving our economy. Working toward these goals, the State's Energy Standards were updated in 2005. All building permit applications filed after October 1, 2005 are required to comply with the 2005 standards. Those permits "in the pipeline" before October 1st have the option of choosing either the 2001 or 2005 standards.

Some of the significant changes in the 2005 Residential Energy Standards include:



- *Efficient Interior and Exterior Lighting:* Generally, all permanent lighting must be high efficacy or controlled by motion sensors.
- *Windows:* Replacement windows must have a permit and they must also comply with the 2005 Energy Standards if they are in a conditioned space.
- *Water Heaters and Heating and Cooling Systems:* Must be high efficiency and Duct sealing standards were increased.

For a complete list of the current requirements, stop by Chula Vista's Planning and Building counter or visit California's Energy Commission on the web at <http://www.energy.ca.gov/title24>. ■

Saving Energy at Home

You could cut a third of your current energy bill by switching to energy-efficient appliances, equipment and lighting.

- *Install a programmable thermostat.* On cold days, set the thermostat to 68°F when you are home (health permitting) and turn it off when you are away. Lowering the temperature 3 to 5°F can save you 10 to 20% on your heating bill.
- *Install low-flow shower heads* to conserve water and save 5 to 10% on water heating costs. Showers can account for up to 50% of your hot water usage.
- *Replace the four lights you use most often* with compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) and save up to \$35 a year in energy costs. ■



A New Perspective in Code Enforcement

Doug Leeper has dedicated much of the last 20 years to protecting the public. This experience began as a Fire Fighter and subsequently a Police Officer in Riverside, CA. After a brief move out of state, Leeper returned to San Bernardino, CA where he took a job in Code Enforcement, connecting him with a new career and, ultimately, in 2005, a position as Chula Vista's Code Enforcement Manager.

From this public safety background, Leeper brings a unique perspective to Code Enforcement. He sees a clear relationship between the condition of a property and the safety and property values of the neighborhood. "It's important for all property owners and managers to understand that what they do or don't do with their property impacts those around them," says Leeper. As a result, one of Leeper's goals



is to educate the public about the benefits of compliance with regulations. He frequently speaks to members of the lending industry and foreclosure contractors, educating them about the importance of maintaining code compliance on all properties, whether occupied or not.

Not surprisingly, his background also sets the tone for his "no nonsense" attitude. "Be firm, be fair, but move forward" is a type of mantra for Leeper. "We have to enforce the rules evenly and fairly. We can't allow one business to operate illegally just because they've been doing it for years, especially when they are next to a business that is following all the rules. It's not fair to those who make the effort to comply and operate legally," says Leeper.

An integral part of the Planning and Building Department, Code Enforcement has the responsibility

of ensuring that the city's land use and building laws are enforced. For more information on Code Enforcement or to report a violation, call 619-691-5280. ■

Did You Know...

These residential building permits can be pulled online by a licensed contractor:

- Water heater replacement
- Water line repair or alteration
- Gas meter reset
- Gas line repair or alteration
- Installation or replacement of FAU and A/C units
- Electric meter reset
- Miscellaneous wiring

Contact the Building Division to find out how: 619-691-5272 or visit www.chulavistaca.gov/sc/dsc and see "Forms" for the "Internet Permitting Form."

EVENTS *For time and location of these meetings, please call 619-691-5101.*

Feb. 6 Design Review Committee and Resource Conservation Commission Hearings

Feb. 8 Planning Commission Hearing

Feb. 9 Growth Management Oversight Commission Meeting

Feb. 15-20 Public counter closed for relocation

Feb. 20 ~~Design Review Committee~~ and Resource Conservation Commission Hearings

Feb. 22 Planning Commission Hearing

Feb. 23 Growth Management Oversight Commission Meeting

Mar. 6 Design Review Committee and Resource Conservation Commission Hearings

Mar. 8 Planning Commission Hearing

CONTACT

Administration (619) 691-5101

Building

Main Office (619) 691-5272
Eastern Office (619) 409-5868
Permit Information (619) 691-5007
Code Enforcement (619) 691-5280
Business Licenses (619) 691-5272
Inspections (619) 409-5434

Planning

Zoning Information (619) 585-5621
General Plan Update (619) 409-5486
www.chulavistaca.gov/sc/pb